

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated September 14, 2005. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, 12-14 and 17-19, 21-23, and 25-34 are under consideration in this application. Claims 20 and 24 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 6, 19, 21, 25 are being amended, as set forth above, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim Applicants' invention. A new claim 34 is being added to recite other embodiments described in the specification, especially from paragraphs [0004], [0056-0058] and [0070] of the corresponding Publication No. US2004/0080293 A1.

The claims are being amended to correct formal errors and/or to better disclose or describe the features of the present invention as claimed. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Informality Rejection

Claims 1, 3-7 and 17-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. As the claims are either being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer or being amended as required by the Examiner, the withdrawal of the outstanding informality rejection is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9, 12-14 and 26-33 were allowed, and claims 19-20 would be allowed if rewritten to overcome the pending 112 rejection and into independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As claim 20 is being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 19 is being rewritten to overcome the pending 112 rejection and into independent form to

include all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, claim 19 is in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1, 3-7, 17-18 and 21-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Dunfield et al. (5,254,914). The prior art references of Brown et al. (4,490,661), Erdman (4,763,347), Kono et al. (5,208,524), Sears et al. (5,953,491), and Shimohara (6,667,598) were cited as being pertinent to the invention.

Claim 1 is an apparatus claim being amended to overcome the 112 rejection and to include the limitations of claim 20. Claim 6 is a method claim being amended to overcome the 112 rejection and to include the limitations of claim 20. Claim 21 is an apparatus claim being amended to overcome the 112 rejection and include the last paragraph of claim 19. Claim 25 is an apparatus claim being amended to overcome the 112 rejection and include the first three paragraphs of claim 21. The new claim 34 is a method claim that includes the first four paragraphs of claim 6, and the last paragraph of claim 19. As each of the independent claims 1, 6, 21, 25 and 34 are being amended or written to overcome the 112 rejection and to recite the patentable features recited in the allowable claims 19-20, they are in condition for allowance. The 102 rejection thus becomes moot.

Conclusion

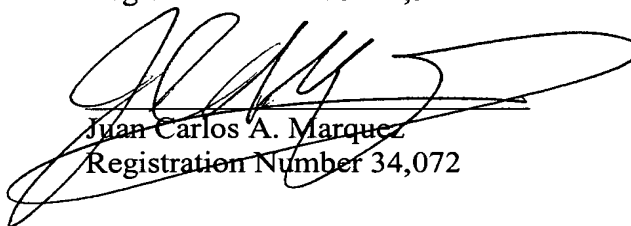
In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution

and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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